

Virginia Department of Forestry
2020 Guidance for Completing RT-130 and the Work Capacity Test (WCT) in a COVID-19 Environment

Due to health concerns related to COVID-19, the VDOF is adjusting the agencies current procedures regarding individual physical fitness testing and refresher training to minimize the exposure risk to our full and part-time employees.

The following guidelines are in effect for the Fall 2020 refresher training and work capacity testing.

Refresher Training - RT-130 (Must be completed between 10/01/2020 and 12/15/2020)

- Utilizing a online, self-paced environment, all agency responders and part-time agency firefighters will review the appropriate online RT-130 Refresher modules through the NWCG's Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR) website, along with other fire related materials that have been designated by VDOF's Fire Staff, in conjunction with the VDOF Regional Fire Specialists.
- In the event that a part-time employee does not have access to internet connectivity, they will contact their full time Department of Forestry contact for assistance

Work Capacity Test

- Any employee who participated in the WCT last year (full or part-time) will be certified at that same level again for this year.
Example: Chad completed the arduous test for calendar year 2020, he will remain qualified at the arduous level for this year (2021).
- In person work capacity testing will only occur for new full and part-time employees, or those part-time employees wishing to return to work with the Department, who did not complete a work capacity test (WCT) last year. The following requirements must be met for all work capacity testing:
 - In order to maintain social distancing requirements, no more than two testers can take the WCT at any one time and location. Only one test administrator should be present. Face coverings should be worn at all times, except by the tester(s), during the actual test itself.
 - Prior to the start of the WCT, the test administrator should verbally ask the following of the person or people taking the WCT:
 - 1. *Today or in the past 24 hours, have you had any of the following symptoms?*
Cough
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
Or at least two of these symptoms:
Fever or Chills or Repeated shaking with chills
Muscle pain or Headache
Sore throat
New loss of taste or smell

- 2. *In the past 14 days, have you had contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19?*

- **Testers should not be asked about symptoms of any other conditions**

Testers who respond “Yes” to either question, should be denied participation and asked to return home, self-monitor and seek medical care if needed. The period of self-monitoring should be for a total of 14 days from when the employee first had a fever, felt feverish or had chills, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and/or came into contact with a person known to be infected.

- Pack tests, work surfaces, and other equipment should be cleaned upon test completion. (Cleaning guidelines are included below.)

Shelter Deployment Training

- Fire Shelter Training video.
Required for all agency responders and part-time firefighters. The training video information will be included with the online refresher information.
- Returning employees. Will not be required to complete a practice fire shelter deployment.
- New employees (full or part-time), will be required to complete a practice deployment of the fire shelter, most likely in conjunction with the completion of the WCT. The same requirements listed for the WCT, will be followed for practice fire shelter deployment.
 - No more than two personnel practicing a deployment, with only one administrator on hand.
 - Maintain social distancing requirements, including the wearing of an appropriate face covering.
 - The same two assessment questions listed for the WCT should be asked of those participating in a practice shelter deployment. An answer of “Yes” is to be handled the same as what was listed for the WCT.
 - Practice Shelters will be cleaned prior to rebagging. Rebagged shelters, work surfaces, and any related equipment should be cleaned upon completion of the exercise.
(Cleaning guidelines are included below.)

Paperwork

- Fiscal-related hiring paperwork requirements will remain the same for this year.
- Documentation of the Fire Refresher and WCT, if taken, should continue to be submitted on Form 4.25, IQS Data Collection, for new employees, or; Form 4.26, IQS Data Update for all others.
- Completion of a Form 8.3, Informed Consent for Work Capacity Tests, will only be required for those who complete the WCT.

Directions for Cleaning Weight (Pack) Vests and Practice Fire Shelters in a COVID-19 Environment

This procedure will be used following each individual use of our vests for pack testing and after a practice deployment of the fire shelter.

According to the manufacturers' directions, the best method to clean and disinfect pack vests and/or practice shelters is to use Lysol brand, or an equivalent, spray disinfectant to apply a light coating to all exposed areas of the pack vest or practice fire shelter, and then allow to air dry for 5 – 10 minutes. A more throughout cleaning using soap and water is also appropriate for either item, however the needed air drying time will be much longer - a minimum of 30 minutes.

Lysol spray disinfectant can be purchased locally or is available through the Regional Office.